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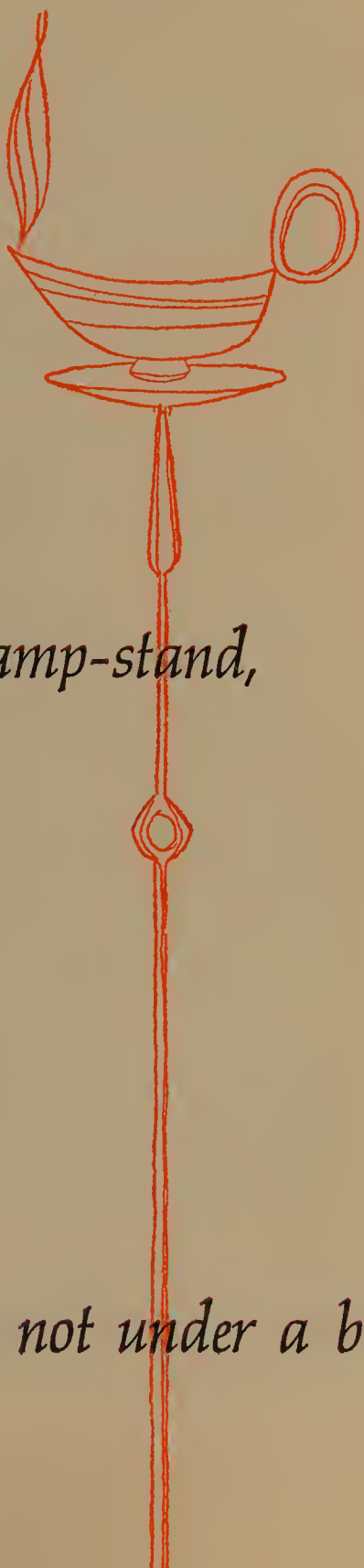

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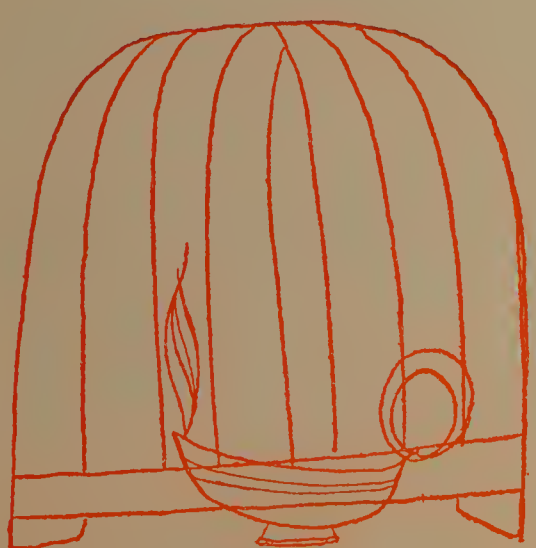

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SPONSA REGIS

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"Our Father"

ROBERT GUELLUY

The God of our faith is not inert; he is at every instant active, transforming. He is among us and in us, making us live with his life and upholding us through his attraction to himself. We must try to consent more wholeheartedly to this divine attraction in order to live for his glory and to continue this difficult conversion of thinking solely of him and abandoning to him even the concern about our spiritual problems. Our only care must be to know and love him. Difficult and radical is such a conversion, which consists in seeing all things as a means of praising God; our usual penchant is to view them as obstacles.

What is proper to God is his gratuity, the ability to give for nothing. It manifests itself in creation, in the call of the chosen people, in the supernatural work of God in his Church. It is initiative, perfect freedom in a love which the wiles of pride cannot confine. It is the bursting forth of a gift.

We have believed in a God who is love, not only someone who loves but someone who is the very activity of loving. This love is not just some sort of benevolence or an anonymous sympathy; it is a paternal love. It is the love of the Father and of the Son in the unity of the Spirit which extends even to us. We have the boldness to say, "Our Father!" If we presume to utter these words, it is because God invites us to do so. The whole message of the New Testament is a clear, decisive invitation to cry out, "Our Father."

In religions other than that of Abraham and of Christ, when God is called "Father" it is simply a way of speaking, of saying that he is benevolent and that one can count on his protection. In the Old Testament God is called "Father" with more insistence on the true significance of the term, but nowhere is he directly addressed as such. The invocation never enters into the dialogue of prayer. It is the audacious innovation of the New Testament to urge us to call out, "Our Father!"

It is obviously a solemn moment of the Mass when we remind God of this audacity which he has given us, when we recall to him this condition of our sonship, when we make bold to accept his divine invitation to adopt the very language of the holy trinity. And, all together, we use these words in the company of our Lord. Despite limitations and sins we address ourselves to the Father in the very words of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is an awesome moment when all present at the Eucharistic banquet, united to Christ in his prayer and sacrifice, join him in saying, "Our Father, who art in heaven, thy will be done." We have the temerity to make a wholesale donation of self, to live in this security, to abandon ourselves to God in asking simply that his will be done, *convinced beyond doubt* that all will be well: his will is paternal. And *to know that we will not be deceived:* that is tremendous! That is the precious core of the Christian life. Generally speaking, we are not at all sure of the quality of the divine designs and we try to plan ahead for ourselves — this seems wiser. But we have been called to a dauntless faith: *to dare to recognize ourselves as sons of God.*

The Gospel does not invite us to despise ourselves; it invites us to love God, and that is quite another thing. It does not summon us to self-hatred but to joyous astonishment in realizing what we are by grace, by gift, and not by our own resources. It invites us neither to exalt nor to depreciate ourselves; these are both forms of pride. Rather, it calls us to enter into the spirit of childhood and to say all together, "Our Father, thy will be done." This is not easy, for we ordinarily incline to superficial attitudes and assume an "as if" pose. We say "Our Father" without really grasping the truth; it remains only an expression. We say it with the heart unmoved. We repeat words whose vigor we have never perceived, whose strength we have never guessed. Let us ask the grace to cry out with a new spirit, "Our Father, who art in heaven, thy will be done." There is no other conversion to desire, no other spiritual progress to dream of.

Our God is not only Someone: he is a trinity, he is a reciprocity, he is a living dialog, he is an exchange, he is a communion, he is a communication, he is a mutual gift, he is an encounter of

absolute generosity. He is the totality, the absolute, in the mutual gift of the three Persons.

We must contemplate the Trinitarian mystery. We are aware from daily life that one is truly himself only in giving; one possesses himself in the measure that he gives himself; one overcomes himself to the extent that he sacrifices himself; one is well-ordered in so far as he no longer thinks of himself. In biblical terms, one finds his life in losing it. This is exactly what takes place in the Trinity, which is the happy issue of union, of self-possession in a communion and a sharing. In the life of the blessed Trinity, the Father is not only someone who gives himself, someone who is father: *the Father is simply paternity who is Someone.* He is nothing other than a paternal relation; nothing belongs to him as his own except his disposition of father. Everything which is not this offering of himself to the Son in paternal love is common to the three Persons. He is truly himself only in being Father.

A father on earth becomes more himself when he has children. People are transformed when they marry; they no longer belong to themselves but consent by marriage to live of and for one another. They are changed again when they have children. However, they existed before, so parenthood is thus a fulfillment, a completion of something they already were. In God, however, the Father is identical with his paternity; he is not someone who fulfills himself in becoming father. In the paternal gift, he is that gift itself — he is nothing other, he has nothing besides. He is the very activity of loving paternally. He is orientation *to* the Son and that is all.

The mystery of the blessed Trinity! Each of the divine Persons is devoid of any turning in upon self; each has nothing that is not given. Each is to the utmost what we are to the minimum: complete capacity to give. We give of our time, of our activity, but the depths of our being we are not able to give. Our offering remains limited by our nature, perverted by sin, distorted by pride. We are incapable of a total self-donation, of an absolute gift. We will become a little more capable in the liberation which will be our death. This will be a whole act, a full immolation in our journey to God; it will be the definitive encounter with God.

In the Trinity the Father is all self-gift, not just his activity but himself. He is only a "fatherly love," a tendency inclining him to the Son. He is the very act of giving. And the Son in the life of the Trinity is nothing other than a living welcome, the personification of a "yes." He is *subsisting assent*, a complete acceptance.

We are little apt for true acquiescence, for a perfect "fiat." We are as little capable of receiving as of giving. The two go together and, in reality, to receive is perhaps the deepest kind of giving. To know how to depend costs us. We do indeed wish to be generous in regard to others, to take the noble role, to lean towards the miseries of another. We do want to be generous with those who have failed us, but we do not want them to be able to help us. We know this temptation not to want to receive, not to want to depend. How far we are from uttering a spontaneous "yes," how little inclined to open our hearts to a gift, how little capable of total readiness!

In the Trinitarian life, on the contrary, the Son is complete openness; he is a *living* "fiat," his Person is a *welcome*. And one may say that the Father in giving himself receives himself — he could not be Father were this not so. He is, therefore, in the position not only of one who gives but also of one who receives. Likewise, the Son, in being total welcome, is simultaneously gift: in this acquiescence, he enables the Father to be Father.

We dare to believe in that marvel, in that mutual exchange, in that totality of giving. We are bold enough to believe that we have a share in this mystery and that we are incorporated into this life. It is our unshakable belief that the Father wishes to see us his sons in the Lord Jesus. We are not the offspring of an abstract God but of one who is Father, Son, and Spirit, who is a vital exchange and a living dialog.

We are loved with this love which exists only in the life of the Trinity; we are loved with the same eternal love of the Father for his only Son. The attitude of God towards me is simply the extension of Trinitarian life. I can be at peace because God sees me in his eternal Word, his only Son. Never can God see the face of man without being reminded of Christ Jesus. He loves me as he loves his only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Do I believe this?

Let us probe these words, "Our Father, who art in heaven." We dare to say them with our Lord, knowing they are addressed to the God who is Father, Son, and Spirit; to say them at Mass with the Lord present among us in the Eucharistic sacrifice. At this sublime moment, after the great prayer of the Canon, we renew our courage in invoking once again the Father in heaven. How is it possible that our days can be so banal, our activity so colorless? How can there be throughout the hours so little faith, in the fleeting minutes so little hope, in our unfolding lives so little charity, when, in the morning, all together, we had the boldness to say, "Our Father," believing it firmly?

These words must again enlighten us, transform our day; this is the liberty toward which we press. If we believed in the Father we would have a different manner; there would be a little more of heaven radiating from us. That is salvation. Our Lord has come to teach us simply this. He has come to enable us to say in all truth, "Our Father." There is nothing else in the mystery of redemption than this gift of God permitting us to cry out, "Our Father!"

God does not simply give us gifts; *He gives himself.* He gives his own life, he makes us his children. Have the courage to realize that you are not a stranger to him, that you are invited to believe truly in this Love, which is possible only in loving. Our love is so weak, our faith so hesitant; we make "as if." We do not know this Lord or ours — our hearts have not been seized nor our souls shaken to their depths.

Constantly we magnify ourselves instead of glorifying God. We must pray, "Our Father, who art in heaven, thy will be done." His is a paternal willing and we may rest in it. Dare to make this capitulation. "If God is good and really understanding, his will will be ours" — so we reason. We hold before ourselves a panorama of illusions. Instead, God would have us shed our preferences in order to be completely at his disposal.

Let us place ourselves again in the presence of this mysterious God who is Father and Son in the unity of the Spirit. Let us abandon to him all our cares, all disquietude, and live in filial confidence, in holy abandonment. "Thy will be done" engages us, not in a dreamy spirituality which implies no transformation,

but in a profound conversion in which we discover the Father. If one thinks of God as Father, realistically, then suddenly the miracle of self-forgetfulness is realized.

This is not a small matter, this radical detachment. His will is to make us his children according to his ways, and his ways are not ours! His will is to accomplish his work in us, and that will be quite different from the work we would have wished to do for him. We are to accept his lead in the certitude of faith, in the sureness of theological living.

We must learn to free ourselves from all manner of self-absorption; thus we will be able to penetrate more deeply this splendid mystery, to take seriously these simple words, "Our Father." We can do that actually only in a fundamental filial disposition which makes us say, "Thy will be done."

This reflection demands a high price. We must consent to transformation, to divinization, to an association in the life of the Trinity. It is not a question of religious poetry or sentiment which enchants us, nor of cultivating fancies, nor of reasoning with profundity. It is a matter of entering into a dialog, a heart-to-heart conversation with our Father. United to Jesus, we will go to the Father, all together.

GARDEN OF THE ASYLUM AT SAINT-RÉMY

These regimented arches, these lumped bushes
leave the unsheltered courtyard open
as the patients' open frightened minds.

A tree spreads helpful fingers. Van Gogh sits
resignedly on the stones, painting
his new home, ordered home of those minds

where shadows, like nuns, walk. The love, he said,
not in Gauguin's yellow house
attacks me here among crusts of bread.

ANNE O'HARA

Mental Tendencies of the Person

GERMAIN LESAGE, O.M.I.

The mental tendencies of man spring from his individual nature and constitute an unavoidable basis for his moral life and spiritual perfection. These inborn desires are a dynamic source of energy that accompanies man during his whole existence; they are the necessary power that drives even the highest faculties. Even a mature person, with a clear vision of his vocation, with a lucid outlook on life, is more or less moved in his decisions by blind aspirations. Thus, perfect maturity demands an orderly integration of these impulses, which in themselves can be either destructive or inspiring.

INDIVIDUALITY

The most fundamental need of man is the conservation and development of his individual personality. Here psychologists find two inborn needs or tendencies: uniqueness and self-esteem.

Uniqueness, when translated into concrete life, becomes creative expression and characteristic behaviour; it is the assertion of oneself, or "self-maintenance."

According to Alfred Adler, the most fundamental tendency of man is an effort to impose himself, an urge to assert his personality. Although this theory might be exaggerated, it remains true that everybody wants to be himself, to act normally as he is, to enjoy some kind of freedom in the display of his distinctive traits or abilities.

This innate need for self-expression is indispensable to the point that its repression brings about a sense of abnormality which develops easily into an inferiority complex. Then the individual who feels inferior would almost naturally burst into excessive reactions of brutality or eccentricity just to forget or hide his psychological troubles.

The need for uniqueness means concretely the urge for a certain leeway of action, for a certain freedom of creation. This aspiration, best seen in artists, is vital to everybody: to the balanced

progress of the child playing with toys, to the joyful contentment of a wife doing her housekeeping, to the satisfactory output of the worker assigned to a machine, to the rewarding satisfaction of the businessman charting a new financial move, to the quiet contemplation of the religious conversing intimately with God.

There is no happiness possible for anyone without an inner conviction of bringing to the world something that is both personal and valuable. No perfection is psychologically possible for a person who could not feel that he is playing a unique and useful part in the universe.

Self-esteem is also required for a wholesome moral life. Without it, the individual personality would disintegrate and sink into anguish or revolt.

This self-esteem should not be understood as purely subjective fancy or conceit. It is something objective that has been called by F. Hoppe a "self-concept" — the idea that a man conceives of his constructive ability, of the level which he wants to reach in his overall activity. Self-esteem so understood is nothing else than an ideal, a confidence that a certain quality of achievement can be reached. Again, self-esteem, if it is based on objectivity, on true natural endowments, and on circumstantial possibilities, becomes a sensible appraisal of one's personality. As a matter of fact, it is personality itself concretely outlined in its dynamic expression. Without such a somewhat optimistic blueprint of his real capacities, no man could stand the efforts and obstacles of life; he would mentally fall into pieces.

The need of self-esteem is therefore an imperative one. No one can exist without it. It is a fact of daily observation that everyone believes himself to be superior to everyone else. This is indeed what renders life possible and prevents the less gifted people from envying their neighbours, from becoming sour and revolting against their social environment.

If, by misfortune, a person loses this self-esteem, he soon becomes mentally deranged: he feels that he is a failure, that nobody has any respect for him, that he is a good for nothing. He cannot help becoming a psychological wreck.

This is why education needs to instill a reasonable self-esteem which should keep away from undue pride as well as from dejec-

tion. Everyone on earth, having been created by God for a distinctive purpose, should be convinced that he is worth something.

OBJECTIVITY

Personal nature cannot develop independently of the rest of the world. Some objective elements, mostly the environment, have a determining influence in the building up of the mature personality. In this regard, man experiences two fundamental needs: renovation and security.

Renovation could be labelled, in more technical language, the need for new experiences. The real satisfaction of a man does not reside in his past accomplishments, but in the conquest of a new goal.

This fact has been well demonstrated by Dorwin Cartwright, who found that many people consider a failure not as a setback, but as an incentive to work harder for the goal. Man is never satisfied with the past or the present; he is bent on the future; he always hopes for something different, for something better. In the case of unoccupied people, this explains the interest shown in daily news, horoscopes, cross-words, comic strips, extensive correspondence. Every day must bring some new vistas or life would become an unbearable dullness.

Thus, the unceasing repetition of the same movements generates disaffection in workers, who do a better job when they can use their personal freedom and ability. A purely "instrumental" function disgusts any person, for psychologically he needs to put something of himself into his task.

No human being can keep his mental balance and perform his duty perfectly if he has to go on constantly in a monotonous routine that always consists in the same tedious repetition of quasi-automatic actions. Something new must come up sometimes to uplift and renovate the mind. A conscientious moral life means progress, and progress necessarily means new horizons. Even in community life, some relief must be provided to those who are constantly confined in the same place with the same companions in the same circumstances for the same purposes. But it should be noted here that spiritual life contains, in its very progress, a constant renewal that is afforded by the many-sided aspects of God's

love. To the contemplative soul, each day affords an inner renovation which transforms an exterior dullness into an interior feast.

Security, understood in its full sense of human success, is another innate desire of man. Even factory workers appreciate stability, pleasing assignments, harmonious relations with fellow-workers and management, pride of having a useful role in a firm well supported by the public.

Hence, the kind of security desired by man is really the "sense of achievement." There is a close link between security and the self-confidence generated by past success. Edward Lee Thorndike has strongly insisted on the importance of past results in the building up of the personality: they are a basic material in the concept that a man forms of himself; in his own eyes as well as in the eyes of others, a person is what he does. Consequently good results help produce a good idea of oneself, while an optimistic concept of oneself helps achieve good results. As Thorndike asserts, "Each person is a center of creative force, modifying himself more or less to suit himself."

Without falling into determinism, one must admit that the feeling of security born from some kind of achievement is needed to induce harmonious personality. A complete security is impossible here on earth, at least from a natural point of view, since failure or catastrophe might always happen; but a sound quietness of mind can be derived from wisdom and maturity. Furthermore, in a religious soul, confidence in divine Providence, an understanding of God's purposes, and belief in a final readjustment in the life hereafter, concur to bring about the inner peace which meets the innate need for security.

SOCIABILITY

Man, being essentially dependent on society for his own perfection, finds in his nature some social needs: these are mainly love and esteem.

Love is an innate tendency of man. Freud has tried to demonstrate that libido constitutes the core of personality. His evidence for this certainly appears biased; but it remains certain that true love, which is spiritual affection rather than physical passion, is a basic need of every man.

This shows itself clearly during infancy, as psychoanalysis has toiled to demonstrate; but it remains equally true all life long. Every person needs to be shown sincere appreciation for what he intimately is. Such affectionate esteem appears to the loved one as a clear proof that he has some value and really deserves a place in the world. The lack of love causes a feeling of emptiness and lonesomeness that degenerates into discouragement or social hostility.

But it should be made clear that the kind of love needed by a person, and particularly by a woman, is not physical passion, which is transient, but spiritual affection, which is permanent. To guarantee a firm control over the emotions that might damage her self-respect and her true love, a woman must have a standard of conduct that will be a sure safeguard against a nature which is inevitably weak towards an attractive object close to her for a length of time.

Religious souls may find in their environment a human love that may be a psychological help sometimes; but the best answer to the basic need for affection is provided to them by a true and deep devotion to God that develops into supernatural contemplation and a fondness which surpasses any terrestrial love.

Esteem from people with whom he lives is a fundamental need of man. This is not prompted by foolish vanity, but by a normal desire to know, from other people's appreciation, that he does well in the fulfillment of his task.

Too often, this longing for esteem is interpreted as a childish craving for compliments. Most frequently however, what a person wants is not so much an empty praise as a testimony of efficiency. Often, especially in religious life, a person wishes to renounce a successful assignment simply because he thinks that his labors are not useful. Because those he works for never express a word of satisfaction, he believes that he is below par, and rather than impose himself any longer he chooses to quit.

This need for esteem is particularly noticeable among teen-agers and youths. Many of them harbor a deep feeling of inferiority which nobody around them cares to dissipate; so, they act on their own, join juvenile gangs, erupt into delinquency and crime, just to prove to themselves that they are worth something. The same feeling of despondency can creep into the mind of a wife who toils all day long for her family without ever being thanked, or of a subordinate

whose solicitous work is exploited as a stepping-stone by an unscrupulous employer. Even among fortunate people, some feel that they are not being appreciated, and so they even act grotesquely in order to be recognized, using every kind of means, dresses, office settings, etc., to gain a status that will bring about a sense of security.

It is undeniable that those who are responsible for the common good must sometimes express their esteem to their subordinates who deserve it, and who might otherwise be tempted to become discouraged and thus betray the role in life which is really their providential means to life eternal.

FINALITY

In every normal and sincere person, there exists an intimate tendency to excel himself. This need takes a twofold form: that of personal perfection and that of religious belief.

Perfection is an innate need of man. Etienne de Greeff declares, on the evidence of extensive psychological tests, that in all normal human beings there is an inborn aspiration to perfection which cannot be ignored without mental disaster. This aspiration, he says, is not a poetic dream, a social invention, or a religious trap; it is an innate necessity stamped in the depth of the soul where the psychic traits of the person originate.

This need for perfection is tied to the essential structure of the human being. It takes the form of a feeling that one has to have a meaning, to be destined for something, to be of importance to the world. It is objectively true that nobody is indispensable; but it also seems certain that no person could be successful without a deep belief in his usefulness hidden in his conscience and kept from his and everybody's looks. The people who are building today's world are those who believe that they have a role to play in the world!

According to de Greeff's theory, this innate instinct for achievement is found in all normal persons of every age until senility, and it impels them to a progressional perfection. Thus, in every individual, a dynamic impulse for betterment is found at a level of personality that could almost be called biological. This tendency constitutes without doubt a most powerful factor in the attainment of success.

It can and must be called upon to ensure an effective improvement either of oneself or of other people.

Religion seems also to be an essential aspiration of mankind. Ethnologists have found that some form of religion has existed among all nations and in all periods of history, a fact that could not be adequately explained without a natural need. Some of the best psychologists teach that the need for a contact with objective reality beyond the physical and social spheres leads to the acknowledgment of a supreme Being.

It is a fact that the absence of contact with the universe — a characteristic of most modern philosophies — generates a metaphysical anguish that ends in psychological disturbance and even suicide.

Many are trying to replace religion, as a link with objective reality, with psychoanalytical, artistic, or poetic knowledge. But none of these substitutes really satisfies, since none can offer a lucid explanation of the cosmos or connect man with an absolute order that gives a satisfactory meaning to man himself. Joshua Liebman, in his bestseller, *Peace of Mind*, affirms that the restlessness of numberless contemporaries is due to the insecurity and forelornness of a life that has no metaphysical basis. The only thing that can restore equilibrium is the confidence that God "will use each of us as a piece of priceless mosaic in the design of his universe."

The several innate needs of man described here are dynamic forces which propel his whole existence. Since they are the underlying energies that drive the spirit, even moral life might wither and disintegrate without them. Perfectly harmonious life consists either in ennobling or in channeling these indestructible aspirations. A well organized and well managed religious life can satisfy all these needs of the human mind and even confer on them a superior dignity and efficiency. The key-stone of a total personal fulfillment is a high spirituality that heeds the advice of Saint Paul: "Have no anxiety, but in every prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your petitions be made known to God. And then the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).

Why Sister Can't Read

HILARY SMITH, O.C.D.

Self-criticism of our Catholic schools and of Sister formation programs is gradually being replaced by positive efforts to raise academic standards in the schools and to improve the formation programs. In spite of the progress evidenced by work appearing in better journals and by discussions in the councils of the more alert congregations, there is still much to be done.

One problem in need of further study is the failure of many religious to do the reading expected of professionals in similar positions outside the convent. It is true that in summer school Sisters often seem to enjoy the same familiarity with Steinbeck and D. H. Lawrence, with Einstein and Planck, with Hindemith and Hanson that their fellow graduate students do. But it is also often true that these Sisters will not return to this level of reading until they return to school the next summer. This problem seems especially common among grammar school teachers, though it is by no means non-existent at the high school level.

There are Sisters who are surprised at the suggestion that they should be reading something worthwhile during the year besides spiritual books. Some convent recreation rooms and libraries stock only the most superficial Catholic magazines and religious books. There are still too many religious who pursue their studies only out of obedience, and as soon as obedience removes the need for study, feel free or even obliged to give up their intellectual pursuits.

This failure to read at a professional level and to read for pleasure limits the teacher in her efforts at motivating students to read. Children have an uncanny way of knowing when a teacher is only repeating what she is supposed to tell the class, and when she is speaking with genuine enthusiasm. It is one thing to tell a class that reading is valuable and enjoyable. It is something quite different to share one's own experiences and delights in reading. I feel that there are still too many Sisters who provide the same motivation for reading that they offer for cleanliness or good behavior: it's the right thing to do.

There are a number of reasons why Sisters are not reading as much as they should. First of all there is no doubt that there is a genuine lack of time. Most Sisters carry far heavier teaching loads than their counterparts outside the convent. But the shortage-of-time excuse must not be given too much credence. Most non-reading housewives give the same excuse even though they may spend hours watching television or gossiping. The waste of time in the convent may not be so obvious because it is so well organized or disguised as virtue or custom. Some communities that spend thousands of dollars for a Sister's formal education would feel guilty about hiring someone to help with the housework so that the Sister might have time to continue her education through further reading. Often household tasks become formalized so that religious aim more for fastidiousness than Christian perfection, and spend more time than necessary in cleaning.

There is a second impediment to reading in the convent that may be removed more easily, perhaps, than the shortage of time. The horarium sometimes seems to be drawn up with the fear that the religious will have some time to dispose of in her own way. Often every minute is accounted for in such a way that the Sister who may need less community recreation or less time to prepare for classes is obliged to divide her time exactly as everyone else in the convent. Fortunately there are some communities today that are allowing their young religious or aspirants large amounts of free time during the years of preparation; superiors can check to see that the time is used profitably. These programs are producing religious mature enough to gauge their own use of time. Perhaps in the future we will see fewer cases of Sisters who have retired from teaching, and now have hours of time on their hands, who are unable to make use of this time because they have never had the experience of organizing their own reading or study schedule.

Another hindrance to reading in the convent, though perhaps less a problem now than before, is the fear of the superior that her subjects will read something that will harm them. One superior was afraid to let the community read *The Pope Speaks* because the Holy Father sometimes treated problems of marriage and the family. That there may be danger in some reading materials cannot be denied; but the perils that may be present in reading are much less

certain than the immaturity and small-mindedness that will certainly result from a failure to read at an adult level. Because of the complexity inherent in every field of learning today, and the specialization required to master any area of knowledge, no superior should feel qualified to serve as censor or judge for the entire community's reading. The problem is made more difficult by the vast differences in character and background within the community. The superior can suggest that religious note the moral judgment given works of fiction by some of the Catholic review services. The classification might even be written on the library card or book jacket. But the final judgment for the mature religious will have to be made by the religious herself, with the aid, perhaps, of her confessor. (The problem of the confessor who limits his reading to the sports page and *Reader's Digest* will have to be treated elsewhere.)

One final problem faced by the Sister anxious to continue her reading outside of college is the inability of the community to afford all of the journals and books that each religious needs. Every community should be able to afford a few good paper-backs and subscriptions to a few scholarly journals, but Sisters should also be encouraged to make use of public library facilities and the periodical holdings of nearby colleges and universities. The sight of more Sisters browsing through the public library and through good book stores may help dispel the notion that Catholic schools are only religious indoctrination centers staffed by a faculty out of contact with the world.

These have been a few random thoughts on the problem of Sisters' reading habits. A more thorough study might reveal that the premises are simply incorrect, and that Sisters by and large are reading as much or more than other professionals. Or perhaps a discussion by qualified superiors may show that the solutions suggested are too facile. We may have to wait for a revision of the idea that Catholic education must serve the largest number possible and not concern itself with the overworked teacher. Or perhaps we may have to revise our view of religious life to put less emphasis on community acts and more on the development of the individual religious. In any event, we must do what is necessary to establish religious houses as the centers of scholarship and sanctity that they have been in the past and that they should be today.

The Meaning of the Cross

SISTER CATHERINE, O.P.

In the midst of our Lord's public life, when his political and social popularity were at their height as a result of his many miracles and authoritative teaching favoring the common people, he gradually began to insinuate a very unpleasant prediction to his ambitious and complacent followers. "From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and scribes and chief priests, and be put to death, and on the third day rise again" (Matt. 16:21). Such a prediction did not seem to fit in at all with the near-sighted plans of the disciples, who, while feeling utter distaste for the first part of it, did not seem to notice the final phrase: "on the third day rise again." Impetuous Peter, thinking to comfort and bolster the courage of the Master, said immediately: "Far be it from thee, O Lord; this will never happen to thee" (Matt. 16:22). Our Lord's prompt and stern reply to this must have been as startling as the prediction of his passion. "Get behind me, satan, thou art a scandal to me; for thou dost not mind the things of God, but those of men" (Matt. 16:23). He called Peter "satan" because Peter's outburst tempted him to deny the eternal plan of God for the sake of worldly glory — to content himself with temporal power and honor rather than undergo the suffering that was asked of him in order that the spiritual kingdom might be established. Rejecting such a proposal, Christ continued, speaking now to all the disciples and the crowd: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For he who would save his life will lose it; but he who loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matt. 16:24-25).

This episode is of the greatest importance to us, for it explains the mystery of life, the struggle between life and death, satan and God, grace and nature, which we experience up to our last breath. The trouble is that we are too often inclined to contemplate the crucifix from without instead of from within, as an object of knowledge instead of a subject of experience. We contemplate

Christ on the cross, Christ who lived and died to redeem mankind. But we do not contemplate the mystical Christ within us, continuing that redemption, forming us in his image. This is due chiefly to the fact that we do not really understand the true meaning of the cross, its nature and source, or our own innate union with Christ through Baptism. We must take the words of Saint Paul literally: "Do you not know that all we who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death? For we were buried with him by means of Baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ has arisen from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be so in the likeness of his resurrection also. For we know that our old self has been crucified with him, in order that the body of sin may be destroyed" (Rom. 6:3-6). If we compare this passage with our Lord's own words to Peter, a light is thrown on the true meaning of the cross.

It will be noticed that our Lord, when speaking to the crowd — that is to all men, to you and me — did not say "take up your crosses." He mentioned but one cross, and that one to be taken up daily, throughout all one's life. And the context of his statement shows that he identified that cross with self — "let him deny himself" — and with life: "he who loses his life for my sake will find it." In other words, we have fundamentally only one cross: ourselves. That cross is with us all our lives. Any other type or degree of cross is only a new manifestation in varied conditions and circumstances of the one cross; and we must take up this cross for one purpose only: "our old self has been crucified with him in order that the body of sin may be destroyed."

How are we to understand this cross of self? To understand it is to understand life, to unlock the mystery of human suffering. For this, as for so much else, we must go back to the beginning of things, to the doing that was our undoing. The fall of Adam indeed evoked God's offer of merciful redemption. Nevertheless, though the sin was remitted through God's plan fulfilled in Christ, the effects remain: the distortion of our nature, the tendency of all our spiritual and material faculties to be isolated and at war with one another and with God.

In these circumstances of our fallen nature we find our penance for sin, our real cross. "When I wish to do good I discover this law, namely, that evil is at hand for me. For I am delighted with the law of God according to the inner man, but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and making me prisoner to the law of sin that is in my members" (Rom. 7:21-23). Through our Baptism into Christ we have been given a new principle of life, the breath of the Holy Spirit which always draws us inward and upward, towards unity within ourselves, among ourselves, and with God. Baptism, in principle, is the victory over the powers of evil. Nevertheless, since our will remains free, and our human condition remains the same, Baptism is not the cessation of struggle but rather the intensifying of it. "If you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the flesh, you will live. For whoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:13-14). If we do not see all this clearly from the start, if we are not prepared to accept this struggle as the law of our present life with our wills fixed in the power of God and our minds on the ultimate goal of eternal life, the merits of Christ may still fail to achieve their effects in us. "He who would save his life" (the life of self-exaltation) "will lose it; but he who loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matt. 16:25). That is the self-denial which restores integrity, the humiliation which is true exaltation, the God-centeredness which is also a true self-centeredness, since the true self is found in God, being illumined by his light, outside of which there is only darkness.

The cross did not make its first appearance on Calvary when Christ was nailed to it. The cross has been living and active since the moment of the fall in every facet of human life, that cross which is the principle of division and separation, and which ultimately brings physical death. God willed that man should see in all its stark reality the effects of his sin on every level of human existence: physical, moral, social, and spiritual separation and division. All of material creation fell under the same condemnation with and through man. "For creation was made subject to vanity — not by its own will but by reason of him who made it subject — in hope, because creation itself also will be delivered from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the sons of God"

(Rom. 8:20-21). When God, in Christ, took upon himself our cross — that is, from the moment he clothed himself in human form in the incarnation until the moment of his physical death on the cross of wood — he cancelled our eternal debt by taking it upon himself. At the same time he showed us, by his life and teaching, the way of the cross as the way back to the Father. He did not relieve man of his cross. Indeed, in a sense, he intensified it for those who are faithful. The New Law actually demands more than the Old, but at a deeper and more spiritual level. But he turned this lifelong cross into a means of sanctification. What began with the fall of man to be only a principle of death has now become, through Baptism, a principle of glory. What Saint Paul says of Christ he means also for us: "He humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even to death on a cross. *Therefore* God also has exalted him" (Phil. 2:8-9). This is the theme Saint Paul spread with tireless zeal among his converts. It was the key to the mystery of suffering and of life. "To them God willed to make known how rich in glory is this mystery among the Gentiles — Christ in you, your hope of glory!" (Col. 1:27).

The point is now clear. The cross is our present life of division in every aspect. The conflict goes on until death. But death, mystical death, begins at the moment of Baptism, at that same moment when eternal life begins as well. So many spiritual books present the cross to us under various minute and isolated forms. The impression so often given in these explanations of "mystical crosses" and purifications is that they are only for a certain period in our spiritual growth, after which delights and consolations will follow. This can be not only misleading, but dangerous. In a subtle way we are led to seek our happiness on this earth, at the end of these "purifications." This tends to take our minds and wills away from the one eternal goal of heaven. We still look for something more or less definitive on earth, however spiritual it may be. It also results in disillusionment, for such never really happens. Suffering ends only with death, even though we may come to have the mind of Christ and love suffering as a means to eternal glory. It is true that spiritual writers have described in these purifications true aspects of the mystical death. But they are only aspects, and

when taken out of their context they can be misleading and sometimes superficial, inclining us to introspection and not to Christ.

Saint Paul's idea was quite different from this. "For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). To become like to Christ in suffering, in death, and in glory was his one preoccupation: "I count everything loss because of the excelling knowledge of Jesus Christ, my Lord.... so that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings: become like to him in death, in the hope that somehow I may attain to the resurrection from the dead" (Phil. 3:8,10-11). Everything is ordered to eternal life in Christ. Baptism has planted in us the seed of this life. We must ever seek its eschatological fulfillment: "Therefore, if you have risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Mind the things that are above, not the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, your life, shall appear, then you too will appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:1-4).

In the early ages of the Church Christians had a deep and lively sense of their oneness with Christ and with one another as his members. The modern age seems to have lost something of this sense. Indeed, for the past three centuries the innate sense of the Christian life as a communal life has been disappearing. Christ has become merely savior and model in a rather extraneous sense. One's spiritual life is one's own business, a subjective and individualistic experience, and something which tends to superficiality. Ascetical practices have lost their vital connection with normal, natural human life. Hence, the "mystical crosses" mentioned have come to be considered a special trial for the privileged few. This easily invites self-centeredness and vainglory instead of Christ-centeredness. And the ordinary Christian, who is bereft of these ambitions and considers the mystical life as something foreign to him, contents himself with mediocrity.

The truth is very different: a sterner reality, and yet a simpler one too. Mystical death in Christ is obedience and charity. These are our penance and the principles of unity and of the restored life of the Trinity within us. Obedience unites us to the will of God and brings our lower faculties into harmony with one another,

subordinating them to our higher faculties, and these to God. Charity unites us with one another, the charity by which we strive to understand one another, to respect one another, to accept one another's variations of character, temperament, faults and weaknesses. "Bear one another's burdens, and so you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2). This is the charity whereby we learn to experience that all men are mystically one in Christ. Living in this way, as members of Christ, we truly share in the life of the Trinity, which is a ceaseless giving between the Father and the Son of the one gift which is the Person of the Holy Spirit.

We need never pretend in this mortal life that obedience and charity are not penance. That would be a superficial observation lacking in a knowledge of fallen human nature. Christian charity must show itself in a profound respect for each human being, with all the individual characteristics of nature and grace with which God has endowed him, however diverse or contrary these characteristics seem to be to our own. There are inevitable and innumerable little injustices in our relations with others which are often unconscious and indeliberate because of the lack of unity in our nature consequent upon the fall. We can never penetrate fully the mind of another. If we could, it would aid us in treating him more justly, in properly evaluating his needs, intentions, desires, habits of action, etc. And conversely, we must accept for our part being treated unjustly in many trifling ways as the penalty of our earthly life, while we aim continually at restoring the fundamental unity of creation. We must be prepared to accept the challenge of Christ at its deepest and most universal level — that challenge whereby he brought obedience and charity into one when he said: "A new commandment I give you, that you love one another: that as I have loved you, you also love one another" (John 13:34). Further, he showed how this charity was a sharing in the life of the Trinity: "If anyone love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our abode with him" (John 14:23); and again: "As the Father has loved me I also have loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments you will abide in my love, as I also have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (John 15:9-10).

Sin is separation and God is integrity. We must seek the Christ-life in us by seeking unity at every level, while at the same time accepting the effects of original sin which will be remedied only in the life of glory. Such effects are well known to all of us: physical and mental illness, human misunderstanding and injustice, the many effects of the powers of evil in the world and in the forces of nature, and all those spiritual trials of sense and of faith which are part and parcel of human nature with its darkened intellect and weakened will. But if we put into practice our Lord's commandment of charity we will find that we practice every other virtue as well, for charity involves all the theological and moral virtues without concentrating on them separately, a thing which can be discouraging and artificial. "For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Gal. 5:14).

The central point of the Christian life is the acceptance of our daily cross in a deep spirit of faith which tells us that it is for us, as it was for Christ, the means of resurrection. "If we are sons, we are heirs also: heirs indeed of God and joint heirs with Christ, provided, however, we suffer with him that we may also be glorified with him. For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that will be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:17-18). For this reason Christianity is a religion of joy, a positive seeking for the world to come for which we count this world and all suffering as nothing. "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings: become like to him in death, in the hope that somehow I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.... I press on towards the goal, to the prize of God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:10-11,14). Until we can make these words our own, letting them penetrate our consciousness at every moment and under every condition in a free and positive response of loving conformity, we have not understood the cross or Christianity.

The Psalms

JOSEPH A. GRISPINO, S.M.

PSALM 9A (Heb. 9)

OCCASION

Psalm 9A is an alphabetic poem, i.e., the first letter of each stanza follows the Hebrew alphabet. The poem speaks of the lot of the Poor Folk, the humble and faithful people of Yahweh who are oppressed by the merciless rich.[1] The inspired song does not reason logically but it lyrically rejoices, moans, prays, and hopes. The writer begins with his own individual case. After he thanks God for deliverance from his enemies, he pens some general considerations of the misdeeds of the wicked. He asks God to punish them and he imparts hope for deliverance to the Poor Folk. The song may date from the Persian period (6-4 centuries B.C.).

2 I will give thanks to you, O Lord, with all my heart;
I will declare all your wondrous deeds.
3 I will be glad and exult in you;
I will sing praise to your name, Most High,
4 Because my enemies are turned back,
overthrown and destroyed before you.
5 For you upheld my right and my cause,
seated on your throne, judging justly.
6 You rebuked the nations and destroyed the wicked;
their name you blotted out forever and ever.
7 The enemies are ruined completely forever;
the remembrance of the cities you uprooted has perished.
8 But the Lord sits enthroned forever;
he has set up his throne for judgment.
9 He judges the world with justice;
he governs the peoples with equity.
10 The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed,
a stronghold in times of distress.

[1] In fact, this psalm, taken together with the following psalm, has been called "the canticle par excellence of the Poor Folk of Yahweh."

11 They trust in you who cherish your name,
for you forsake not those who seek you, O Lord.
12 Sing praise to the Lord enthroned in Sion;
proclaim among the nations his deeds;
13 For the avenger of blood has remembered;
he has not forgotten the cry of the afflicted.
14 Have pity on me, O Lord; see how I am afflicted by
my foes,
you who have raised me up from the gates of death,
15 That I may declare all your praises
and, in the gates of the daughter of Sion, rejoice
in your salvation.
16 The nations are sunk in the pit they have made;
in the snare they set, their foot is caught;
17 In passing sentence, the Lord is manifest;
the wicked are trapped by the work of their own hands.
18 To the nether world the wicked shall turn back,
all the nations that forget God.
19 For the needy shall not always be forgotten,
nor shall the hope of the afflicted forever perish.
20 Rise, O Lord, let not man prevail;
let the nations be judged in your presence.
21 Strike them with terror, O Lord;
let the nations know that they are but men.

THE SCRIPTURAL MEANING

The poem opens (2-3) as an act of thanksgiving in which the poet wants everyone to know the wonderful deed which Yahweh has performed for him. That deed is the fall of his enemies due to God's intervention (4-5), which is conceived as a judiciary act of God sitting on his throne and judging with equity. Because of this personal experience the bard begins to recall (6-7) numerous executions of the wicked which Yahweh performed in the past and the destruction of their cities. Then with satisfaction the writer gazes upon Yahweh (8-9) as the judge of the world who governs it with justice. Although God subdues the wicked, he is a refuge for the oppressed, the Poor Folk (10-11), those who know his person (not just his "name") as master of the world and who seek to serve him. The poet concludes (12) with a clarion call to

praise Yahweh and his exploits. Sion, i.e., Jerusalem, is painted as the center of his glorious world empire. The reason for this exhortation (13) is Yahweh's intervention in favor of the oppressed Poor Folk. The songster then returns (14-15) to his personal case and to the motive of his thanksgiving: he was at the very gates of death and God retrieved him so that he could sing God's glory in Jerusalem (often called "the daughter of Sion"). Note the antithesis between the gates of death and the gates of Jerusalem. The hymn continues (16-17) with the renewed declaration (of verses 6-7) of the capitulation of the haughty whose snares have boomeranged and of the triumph of Yahweh's justice, at least in the case of the poet. (It is well to remark here that at times the connections in these alphabetic poems are very loose. This is due to the necessity of each stanza's beginning with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet even at the cost of "logic.") The poet adds (18) that the wicked will go to the nether world.

An expression of confidence that God will not forget his Poor Folk ends the prayer (19). With that easy familiarity often found in Hebrew prayer, the bard begs (20-21) that the proud will not prevail and that God judge the pagans and make them realize their subordinate role in relation to him.

LITURGICAL MEANING

In the Mass of Septuagesima Sunday we can pray in this spirituality of the Poor Folk of Yahweh by also being resigned and humble, while nonetheless remembering we have consolations which the ancient Hebrews did not have — the poor, humble Christ as our model and the consolation of the eternal reward in heaven.

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Book Reviews

POPE, COUNCIL AND WORLD. By Robert Blair Kaiser. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1963. Pp. x, 266. Cloth, $4.95.

THE JOHANNINE COUNCIL: Witness to Unity. By Bernard Häring. Translated by Edwin G. Kaiser. Herder and Herder, New York, 1963. Pp. 155. Cloth, $3.50.

TWELVE COUNCIL FATHERS. By Walter M. Abbott, S.J. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1963. Pp. xvi, 176. Cloth, $3.50.

THE COUNCIL IN ACTION: Reflections on the Second Vatican Council. By Hans Küng. Translated by Cecily Hastings. Sheed and Ward, New York, 1963. Pp. ix, 276. Cloth, $4.50.

It was a matter close to the heart of Pope John that every Christian, certainly every Catholic, should make the Second Vatican Council the object of his own concern, his prayer and his earnest study. Writers of every persuasion and various employment have busied themselves to provide material for our study. These four books differ from each other in their approach, style and content, but they complement one another remarkably as they join with Pope John in "celebrating this Council."

Certainly *Time's* award-winning correspondent, Mr. Kaiser, must have been among the busiest in Rome. *Pope, Council and World* is remarkable not only for its sprightly and attractive style but for the completeness of the narrative. Although an "outsider," he is considered by responsible men to be giving a substantially accurate story of what went on inside. This book has strong points of real value, including an unusual synthesis of Pope John's sense of universal fatherhood and brotherhood, which forms the background for his opening to the East; a clear narrative of the day-to-day functioning of the Council; and a keen analysis of the problems discussed, based on good theological insight. It also has weak points, notably a chronic sniping at the Curia. Even if deserved, it is indiscriminate. Tar in such broad strokes blackens the good along with the errant; "Curia," "curialists," and "curial mind" become bad words. Despite his obvious insight, he often sees events, arguments and persons in a too simple black and white. At one point we must protest that John is not praised by plundering Pius. But the good of the book vastly outweighs the bad; it can bring great riches if one reads with discrimination.

It is a different experience to sit at the feet of a master such as Father Häring, himself a loving disciple of Pope John (and of those other Johns, the Baptist and the Divine). Here is not a journal of what happened in the first session. Here are scholarly and moving meditations by a pastoral theologian, a *peritus* at the Council, on the role of the Church as a testimony of love and service to the whole people of God. Light is shed on the work of the Council witnessing to the

mystery of unity in its many aspects. Some of the Council topics discussed here are a deeper penetration into the meaning of Tradition, the role of Bishops and the Roman Curia (he gives due credit to those many Cardinals and Bishops who have sincerely contributed to the *aggiornamento*, and on whose good will further reform depends), the sanctity of the clergy and the people of God, the conversion of all Christians to unity. A final chapter, "Toward a More Fruitful Catholicity," is a monumental and formative essay—here is the "inspiration" Cardinal Ritter speaks of in the Foreword. This is a work for serious study and reflection, a blueprint for the renewal favored by Mr. Kaiser. It is known that Pope John read this book carefully and recommended it to others.

Reading *Twelve Council Fathers* is like sitting in on an exciting conversation. Here several leading "insiders" discuss the experience of the first session as well as their hopes for the future, the needs and the opportunities of the Church and Vatican II in the world today. We hear Cardinal Doepfner speak of "a second spring of spiritual life for the faithful," arising especially from a renewed veneration for the word of God. Cardinal Suenens informs us that the central theme chosen for the Council is "Church of Christ, Light of the Nations." The first part of this theme looks to the interior life of the Church, the latter to the influence of the Church in the modern world. Cardinal Leger reflects on the necessity for every Christian to be involved, in fact to give leadership, in social, economic, and moral problems of the world. Cardinal Alfrink speaks on religious liberty, ecumenism and the biblical movement. Not less important is the final section giving some opinions on controversial subjects that are surely due for more discussion. Much of this material has appeared in *America* during the past year, but Father Abbott has rendered a worthy service in preparing it in permanent form for ready reference.

We can only rejoice that Father Küng was persuaded to gather his papers for publication, for (as the publisher's blurb has it), "They are not only a guide to the Council, and a reliable one, but part of its intellectual history." The several chapters were lectures or statements made at Rome during the first session of Vatican II to meetings of bishops, at pontifical colleges, and for press and radio (therefore we find considerable unevenness in style and depth). It serves to establish for us something of the intellectual framework for the myriad ideas and movements we find recorded in the "journals" of the first session. The essays discuss the nature of an ecumenical council and the possibility of its failure; the operating procedure of a council in history and today; the necessity and nature of the liturgical reform; matters of doctrine and the theological task of this Council ("Precisely because, unlike most earlier councils, there is *nothing in particular* needing to be condemned and thus defined, there is a danger of wanting to produce judgements and definitions

on *anything and everything*" — p. 213); the relationship of papal and episcopal offices. He concludes with reflections on the need of ecumenism in the missions and a final chapter on what was achieved at the first session, a fine evaluation considering its brevity. From the first Father Küng calls the Church to honesty and courage (typical of Küng himself), and many of the topics discussed here are being courageously studied by the Fathers in the second session. His own conclusion seems appropriate: "We have not yet by any means reached the goal, and a long and trying way still lies ahead of us, full of old dangers and new risks. It is still going to call for watchfulness, boldness, clearsightedness, endurance, strength and prayer. But what lies behind us gives us courage and confidence to dare anew" (p. 276). An index would have given added value to the book.

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STAND STRONG IN THE LORD. By William Eberschweiler, S.J. Translated by Sister Aloysi Kiener, S.N.D. Alba House, Staten Island, New York, 1962. Pp. 348. Cloth, $3.95.

This book is a rather profound mystical treatise compiled from the spiritual conferences of Father Eberschweiler some years after his death. The original was published in German in 1931. Even in its English garb the conference style is still evident. Throughout, the presentation is exhortatory, with a strong emotional appeal.

On the whole the translation is good, but the book is marred by more than the usual dose of printing errors, especially in the first two parts.

The original editor of the German work, Father W. Sierp, S.J., arranged the conferences under four headings which form the four parts of the work: I. The Interior Life — Its Vitality and Grandeur; II. The Practice of the Interior Life; III. Zeal for Souls — Fruit of the Interior Life; IV. Means for Cultivating the Interior Life.

The elaboration of these topics is undertaken in glowing, unctious, almost poetical terms. This plus its strong emotional appeal does not make it a book suited for beginners; but the well initiated will find this a delightful and encouraging work to peruse. In general a too rosy picture is painted of the divine life in the soul. It could lead beginners astray and finally to discouragement. The matter contained in these pages is much better suited for meditation than for instruction.

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RELIGIOUS VOWS IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH. By Rev. Cronan Regan, C.P. Scranton, Pennsylvania, 1962. Pp. xiv, 126. Paper, $2.50.

Written as a dissertation for the faculty of Theology at the Angelicum in Rome, this study approaches the implications of the religious life as a life given for others in the Mystical Body, through a detailed investigation of the concepts of merit and satisfaction. Careful definition

and distinction make this work useful as an explanation of what is meant when we say we merit and satisfy for others eminently by the religious vows.

However, given current thinking on the religious life, it is possible that the very necessity or desirability of a study of the vows in terms of merit and satisfaction would be in question, as it encourages a "quantitative" frame of mind and requires, at least for the notion of satisfaction, a stress on penal, renunciatory aspects. Father Regan is explaining the greater reality of oneness in the glorious mystery of the Church according to lesser and admittedly limited notions. He does not claim to be doing anything else, yet one feels that the attempt to be rigorously precise risks losing sight of the fuller dimensions of the mystery of the vows in the Church's life.

Sister Mary Eileen Paul, S.N.D.
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10.	Average No. copies each issue during preceding 12 months	Single issue nearest to filing date
A. Total number of copies printed (net press run)	11,016	10,500
B. Paid Circulation		
1. To term subscribers by mail, carrier delivery, or other means	9,927	9,794
2. Sales through agents, news dealers, or otherwise	25	25
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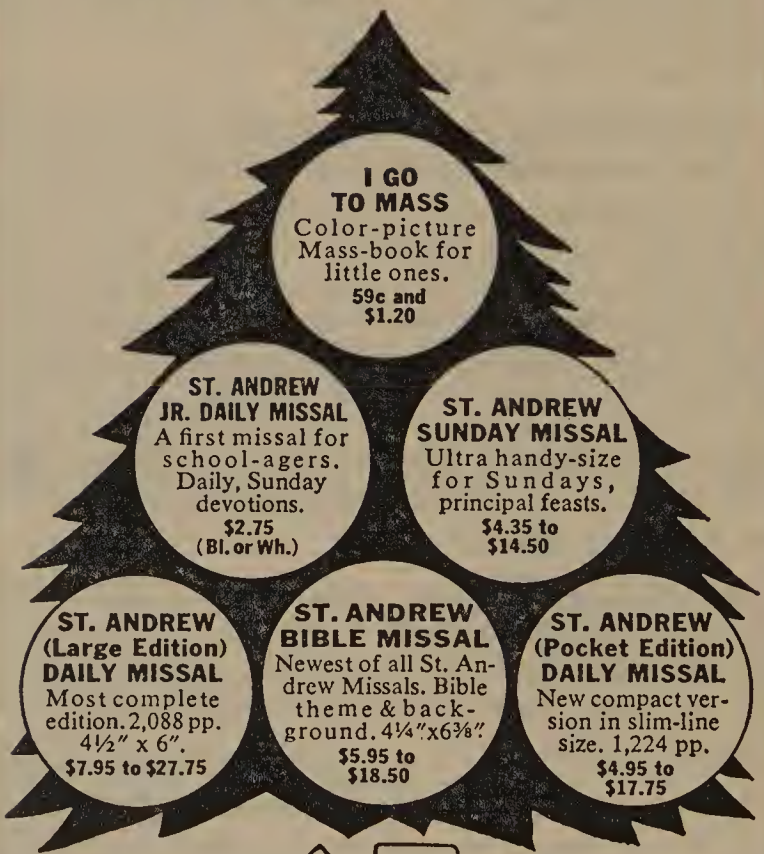
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